

study for the project and submitted the same to Government of Sri Lanka for further action.

Proposal to introduce new rail services

548. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of proposals to introduce new rail services are pending with Government;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Government of Rajasthan has submitted some proposals in this regard and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the criterion fixed for starting new rail services and the basis on which the proposals of the Government of Rajasthan have not been accepted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) Out of 55 pairs of new trains announced in Rail Budget Speech 2006-07, only 8 Pairs of new trains are left for introduction.

(b) No, Sir. No such proposal has been received from Government of Rajasthan. However, some proposals have been received from people's representatives *inter alia* regarding introduction of trains.

(c) New train services are provided depending upon various factors like demand, traffic justification, availability of resources, operational feasibility etc. Introduction of new trains is an ongoing exercise over Indian Railways and train services are gradually provided irrespective of geographical boundaries every year. 5 pairs of new trains services announced in Railway Budget 2007-08 will serve Rajasthan.

Protection of senior level officers from private players

549. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of private players are entering the container train business, requiring senior level personnel with experience in railways' operations and logistics;

(b) whether Indian Railways are aware of imminent threat of poaching of its senior level managers by private players; and

(c) what steps are being taken by the Railways to protect its senior level officers from being lured away by private operators?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. In the current year, only one player applied for container train business and it is also not necessarily correct that private players require senior level personnel with experience in Railway's operations and logistics.

(b) There does not appear to be any imminent threat.

(c) The Railways are a robust organization with the best management practices that adequately cater to the professional aspirations and personal comforts of its employees.

Vacancies in Railways

550. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of vacancies in Railways, zone-wise; and

(b) the action taken to fill up the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The approximate vacancies on zonal railways for Group 'C' & 'D' as on 31.12.2006 are:

Central	11537	Eastern	11659
East Coast	8228	East Central	13663
Northern	17829	North Central	8035
North Eastern	2845	Northeast Frontier	8475
North Western	7283	Southern	8599
South Central	10064	South Eastern	12296
South East Central	8839	South Western	6094
Western	15172	West Central	7529